

Letter From Florida.

Ed. Register:—We have just returned from a visit to the oldest city in the United States, or at least to one of the places that makes this claim—St. Augustine. The natural surroundings are not such that the average man, who had a choice of territory in Florida, would take it for a home. But for the purpose of defense from a foreign foe it is admirably situated, and this, of course, is what the builders of Fort Marion had in view. The city is some distance back from the actual beach of the Atlantic. There intervenes a narrow wooded island, a wide grassy marsh and a space of open water of sufficient depth to permit navigation by small boats. As far as its physical features are concerned the city is unique among the Florida resorts and is rich, not only in historic interest, but also with architectural beauty. The old fort, the city gates, the narrow, winding streets, and several old buildings are reminders of the Spanish occupancy.

Mr. Flagler of the Standard Oil Company, and owner of about everything of value on the east coast of Florida, has his winter home here and has poured millions into the development and the beautifying of this place than he has into all his other resorts combined. And he has done well—wonderfully well. He is the sole owner of the Florida East Coast R. R., and is now achieving an engineering feat of unusual interest by extending his railroad across the chain of islands between the Florida coast and Key West.

The development of this State, or rather the eastern coast thereof, is the hobby of this aged multi-millionaire. Whether the returns to him justify the outlay he alone knows, as he is sole owner of everything into which he puts his money, and therefore has to issue no financial statements. All of the hotels he erects are palaces in which only the wealthy can afford to dwell, and before which the "not polloi" can but stand with open-mouthed wonder. He has three immense hotels in St. Augustine, and of these the Ponce de Leon is said to be the most beautiful in existence. No picture can do it justice. He who would get an adequate conception of its grandeur must himself walk about it and "tell the towers thereof."

Anastasia island, which keeps the breakers of the Atlantic from the walls of the city, has no great natural charms, but it contains a museum that ought to be visited by every tourist to Florida. Here are to be seen hundreds of alligators, and among them are the largest in captivity. There are many other living specimens from the world of wild life. There are huge rattlers, moccasins—the largest ever found in Florida. Here is also the only pen of live iguanas—a species of lizard that ranges in length from two to five feet. Recently two of the largest alligators got into a fight. The battle was a royal one and endured five hours. Each monster chewed the other up pretty well, and the victor carried off—internally, I suppose—as a trophy one of the hind legs of his opponent. The keepers of these "gators" have learned from experience that it is not well to attempt to stop such contests, because the beast first interfered with is placed for that moment at the mercy of his opponent, and the result is often fatal to him. The only thing to do is to let them fight it out.

At this museum is to be found one of the wonders of the world—water that burns. It comes from an artesian well one hundred and twenty feet in depth, and its peculiar property was discovered after it had been flowing two years. It is delicious to drink, as the various mineral elements seem to have combined in such proportions as to have neutralized each other as far as the taste is concerned. When a lighted match is touched to this water it flames up like alcohol, and yet it ignites at so low a temperature that one can hold his hand in the flame a few seconds without having it burned. A match must be held in ten seconds before it will be kindled. The keeper took my wife's handkerchief and let the flames pass through it for a quarter of a minute. When he handed it back there was no trace of a burn on it. The flame is a bright blue, and is

supposed to result from the combination of hydrogen and sulphur. The other chemical elements are iron, magnesia and sodium.

H. A. STOWELL.

THOUGHT IT TIME TO STOP.

Wonders of the Telephone Too Much for Sitting Bull.

C. J. H. Woodbury, the engineering expert of the telephone company, told the boot and shoe men the other night the true version of the Sitting Bull and telephone story, says the Boston Herald. Sitting Bull had been captured by the United States troops and was held in close confinement. So also was another obstreperous Indian, held in confinement at a post about 100 miles away. The officer in charge of Sitting Bull had been chasing the Indians for two months, and was wondering what he would do with the captive. In an inspired moment he decided to arrange an interview between the two Indians over the telephone. After the necessary ringing up Sitting Bull was asked if he cared to talk into the machine. He talked into it for several minutes and did a heap of listening also.

He put down the instrument finally, and for hours was even more gloomy than usual, at last beginning to talk to himself, something very rare for the Indian. Asked if he was dissatisfied with his accommodations or if there was anything they could do for him he broke forth at last:

"No, I'm finished. It's all right when the white man's plating talks the white man's language; but when it learns to talk the red man's tongue it's time to stop."

It is believed in the west, where the incident is fairly well known, that this talk over the telephone between the two Indians had a considerable influence in shortening the Indian wars.

SURELY WAS THE BEST MAN.

Not Much Doubt as to the Bridegroom's Superiority.

"Who was the best man?" inquired the able editor of the Polkville (Ark.) Weekly Clarion.

"Well, I reckon, all things considered, the groom was," replied Mr. Lab Jacket, from out at "Possum Trot," who had percolated into the sanctum with the news of a wedding which had been solemnized in his balliwick upon the previous evening.

"The groom?" replied the scribe, in some surprise.

"Er—yah!—or, 'tennyrate, that's the way he 'peared to me. He got the bride's father so drunk before the ceremony that the old gentleman had to stay hid in the hay-mow all night and was seeing green dogs and such like, when I came by this morning. The groom also threw the bride's two brothers out of the window for objecting to their sister's flinging herself away on him, and talked her mother to a gasping standstill when she sorter started in to remonstrate with him—and she's never been what you'd call an unable lady, that-a-way, herself. Yep!—looking the gent up on one side and down the other, I shorly reckon the groom was the best man present upon that interesting occasion."—Puck.

SETTLED BY THE WAITER.

All Doubt About the Pineapple Forever Set at Rest.

William C. Whitney, Jr., who has spent a year in Indian Territory learning practical mining at Quapaw, described at a dinner party in New York a Quapaw restaurant.

"At this restaurant one evening," he said at his description's end, "two miners near me got into a botanical argument about the pineapple, one claiming that it was a fruit and the other that it was a vegetable."

"In the midst of their argument the waiter entered in his shirt-sleeves and looked about to see what was the cause of the loud talking."

"The miners decided to let the waiter settle their argument, and accordingly one of them said:

"Pete, what is a pineapple? Is it a fruit or a vegetable?"

"The waiter, flicking the ashes from his cigar, smiled at the two men with pity."

"It's neither, gents," he said. "It's an extra."

WAS BEYOND THE PALE.

The Reason Chaucer Is Not in Society Now.

A friend of James Whitcomb Riley tells of an occasion when the humorist, who is as a rule, extremely averse to social functions, was induced to attend a "literary" dinner in Indianapolis given in honor of a novelist of that city.

Riley had been told off to take in to dinner the sister of his host, an excellent woman, though anything but "literary."

The conversation touching upon the beauties of Chaucer, about whom a certain set of the city was then cultivating a fad, a spirited discussion ensued, during which the bewildered sister caught from time to time only the name "Chaucer."

At last she whispered to Riley: "Who is this Mr. Chaucer they're talking about so much? Is he very popular in society?"

"Madam," solemnly responded Riley, "that man did something that forever shuts him out of society!"

"Heavens!" exclaimed the worthy dame; "and what was that?"

"He died several hundred years ago," said Riley.

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Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, Wm. R. Edgar, Administrator with will annexed, of the estate of Sarah M. Emerson, deceased, will make Final Settlement of his accounts with said estate as such Administrator, with will annexed, at the next term of the Probate Court of Iron County, Missouri, to be held at Ironton, in said county, on the 13th day of May, A. D. 1907.

WM. R. EDGAR,
Administrator with Will Annexed.

NOTICE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT.
Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, Wm. R. Edgar, Administrator de bonis non, of the estate of J. W. Emerson, deceased, will make Final Settlement of his accounts with said estate as such Administrator de bonis non, at the next term of the Probate Court of Iron County, Missouri, to be held at Ironton, in said county, on the 13th day of May, A. D. 1907.

READY TO TAKE NOTES.

Cruel Husband Had Stenographer to Record Wife's Remarks.

Frederic Irland, at the last convention of the National Association of Stenographers at Atlantic City, said of a somewhat harsh rebuke that one stenographer had administered to another:

"That rebuke was a little to cruel, was it not? It reminds me of the cruelty of a Washington man—a piece of cruelty wherein stenography played an unwitting part."

"As this man came to bed one night his wife said to him:

"Has the stranger gone; I didn't hear him."

"Oh, no, dear. He hasn't gone," the husband replied. "I have instructed the maid to let him out in three or four hours."

"The wife looked amazed and stupefied."

"What—why—who on earth is he, anyway?" she stammered.

"My dear," said the husband, quietly, "he is a shorthand reporter. You see, I nearly always forget what you say to me during your discourse from 11 till two and sometimes I go to sleep while you're talking. So I thought I'd have your lecture written out to-night and study it at my leisure. The young man is all ready, the door is open so that he can hear you, and you may be as soon as you like."

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